

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 00684 050722Z

17

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 IO-14 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

SAM-01 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 EB-11 OMB-01 MMS-03 ACDA-19

DRC-01 /150 W

----- 063969

O 050645Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2473

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0684

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, UK, IO, AS

SUBJ: NOTIFICATION TO GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA

ON DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION

REF: A) STATE 022764

B) STATE 019914

C) STATE 06883, 14 JAN 72

2. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF INSTRUCTIONS IN REF A, ON FEB 5 EMBOFF AND COUNSELOR OF BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION PRESENTED AUSTRALIAN DFA WITH TEXT OF RATIONALE ON NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS IN INDIAN OCEAN AND EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA, USING MATERIAL IN REF B, AS AMENDED. BLAKENEY, FIRST ASST SECRETARY, DEFENSE DIVISION, UNDERTOOK TO STUDY MATERIAL AND TO PASS ON TO AUSTRALIAN DEPT OF DEFENSE AND CABINET MINISTERS AND SAID HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH US IF FURTHER QUESTIONS OCCURRED TO GOA.

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PAGE 02 CANBER 00684 050722Z

BLAKENEY NOTED THAT RATIONALE DOES NOT INDICATE SPECI-

FICALLY THAT U.S. WANTS TO AVOID COMPETITION WITH SOVIET NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS IN INDIAN OCEAN AND THAT DEPLOYMENTS WOULD BE LOW KEY, AS U.S. HAD INDICATED IN LETTER BASED ON REF C. EMBOFF NOTED THAT OUR INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO PRESENT RATIONALE, WHICH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF BUT AGREED TO BRING TO ATTENTION OF DEPT FACT THAT BLAKENEY HAD MADE INQUIRY ON THIS POINT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS IN REF A, ON FEB 5 EMBOFF AND COUNSELOR OF BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION (BRYAN BARDER) PRESENTED AUSTRALIAN DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (BLAKENEY, FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, DEFENSE DIVISION) WITH RATIONALE ON NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS IN INDIAN OCEAN AND EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA, USING MATERIAL IN REF B AS AMENDED BY SERIES OF DEPARTMENT AND AMEMBASSY LONDON TELS. EMBOFF PRESENTED RATIONALE IN FORM OF AIDE MEMOIRE, WHILE BARDER PRESENTED HIS INSTRUCTIONS ORALLY, ALONG LINES ALREADY CLEARED WITH DEPT.

3. BLAKENEY UNDERTOOK TO STUDY AIDE MEMOIRE WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD BE REFERRED TO AUSTRALIAN DEPT OF DEFENSE AND TO CABINET MINISTERS. HE SAID HE MAY BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH US ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS. HE ASKED FOR DETAILS ON SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE REFERRED IN AIDE MEMOIRE (I.E., IN REF B). EMBOFF REPLIED THAT DETAILS ON SOVIET NAVAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIAN OCEAN ARE PERIODICALLY PROVIDED TO GOA THROUGH SERVICE CHANNELS AND THAT HE DID NOT HAVE A CURRENT LIST. HOWEVER, THIS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY. BLAKENEY ASKED FOR DETAILS ON U.S. NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS TO INDIAN OCEAN. EMBOFF RECALLED THAT CHARGE HAD PROVIDED BLAKENEY WITH LIST OF ANTICIPATED MOVEMENTS ON JAN 30.

4. BLAKENEY RECALLED THAT AMBASSADOR RICE HAD WRITTEN TO THEN PRIME MINISTER MCMAHON ON JAN 14, 1972, REVIEWING U.S. PLANS FOR DEPLOYMENT OF NAVAL UNITS TO INDIAN OCEAN. (LETTER CONVEYED INFO IN REF C).  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CANBER 00684 050722Z

BLAKENEY NOTED THAT LETTER HAD STATED U.S. WANTS TO AVOID COMPETITION WITH SOVIETS IN INDIAN OCEAN AND THAT DEPLOYMENTS WOULD BE IN LOW KEY. AIDE MEMOIRE DID NOT APPEAR TO CONTAIN THESE POINTS, AND BLAKENEY WONDERED IF THERE HAD BEEN CHANGE. EMBOFF NOTED THAT RATIONALE RECALLED THAT VISITS OF U.S. NAVY VESSELS TO INDIAN OCEAN HAD BEEN DISRUPTED BY VIETNAM WAR AND THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER HAD INDICATED THAT WE

EXPECT U.S. NAVY VISITS IN THE FUTURE WILL BE MORE FREQUENT THAN IN PAST. EMBOFF ALSO NOTED THAT AIDE MEMOIRE (PARA 3, REF B) STATES THAT "DEPLOYMENTS ARE NOT A THREAT TO ANY NATION OR GROUP OF NATIONS." HOWEVER, EMBOFF NOTED THAT OUR INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO PRESENT AIDE MEMOIRE, WHICH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. EMBOFF AGREED TO BRING TO ATTENTION OF DEPT FACT THAT BLAKENEY HAD MADE INQUIRY ON THIS POINT.

5. IN MAKING ORAL PRESENTATION BARDER MADE CLARE THAT HMG FULLY AGREED WITH EXTENSIONS AT DIEGO GARCIA AND WITH INCREASE IN U.S. NAVY DEPLOYMENTS TO INDIAN OCEAN, NOTING THAT ROYAL NAVY DEPLOYMENT IN INDIAN OCEAN, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN LIMITED TO TWO FRIGATES ON STATION (WITH TWO OTHER FRIGATES ON PASSAGE TO INDIAN OCEAN AND TWO ADDITIONAL FRIGATES ON PASSAGE TO U.K. ) WOULD BE INCREASED TO TASK GROUP OF DESTROYER AND FIVE FRIGATES WHICH WOULD REMAIN CONSIDERABLY LONGER IN INDIAN OCEAN THAN PRESENT PAIRS OF FRIGATES. BARDER FURTHER NOTED THAT THE INCREASED DEPLOYMENTS AND EXTENSION OF FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA ARE IN WESTERN INTERESTS IN GENERAL, RATHER THAN PRIMARILY RELATED TO RECENT MIDDLE EAST EVENTS. HE SAID THAT THE PROSPECT OF REOPENING OF SUEZ CANAL AND POSSIBLE INCREASE IN SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN WERE ALSO RELEVANT FACTORS. HE ADDED THAT BRITISH INVOLVEMENT IN THE DIEGO GARCIA EXTENSIONS IS LIMITED TO THE PROVISION OF THE NECESSARY REAL ESTATE. HE STATED THAT THERE WOULD BE PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION AND ANSWER ON DIEGO GARCIA IN HOUSE OF COMMONS FEB. 5 AND THAT HE WOULD PROVIDE BLAKENEY WITH COPY OF EXCHANGE.

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PAGE 04 CANBER 00684 050722Z

6. BARDER INFORMED BLAKENEY THAT BRITISH EMBASSY RANGOON HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO BRIEF AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM (WHO IS CURRENTLY VISITING BURMA) ON THE DIEGO GARCIA EXTENSIONS. BLAKENEY SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A REPORT THAT THIS HAD BEEN DONE.

7. COMMENT: BLAKENEY IS METHODICAL AND CAREFUL WORKER, AND QUESTIONS HE RAISED WERE CLEARLY INTENDED TO BRING OUT POINTS HE ANTICIPATED WOULD BE RAISED BY AUSTRALIAN CABINET MINISTERS. HIS ATTITUDE WAS FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL, AS HE ALWAYS IS. END COMMENT. HARROP

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## Message Attributes

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**Control Number:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 05 FEB 1974  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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